

November 14, 2023

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 23-95

The purpose of this letter is to inform County Welfare Departments (CWDs) regarding Assembly Bill (AB) 2300 and its impact to the Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA)/Entrant Cash Assistance (ECA) programs and Trafficking and Crime Victims Assistance Program (TCVAP).



KIM JOHNSON
DIRECTOR

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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
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GAVIN NEWSOM
GOVERNOR

November 14, 2023

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 23-95

TO: ALL CALWORKS PROGRAM SPECIALISTS
ALL COUNTY WELFARE DEPARTMENTS
ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL COUNTY REFUGEE COORDINATORS

SUBJECT: CHANGES TO REFUGEE CASH ASSISTANCE (RCA), ENTRANT CASH ASSISTANCE (ECA), AND TRAFFICKING AND CRIME VICTIMS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TCVAP): THE EXPANSION OF THE DEFINITION OF DISABILITY-BASED UNEARNED INCOME, EXEMPTIONS, AND GOOD CAUSE

REFERENCE: [45 CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS \(CFR\) § 400.65\(A\)](#), [45 CFR § 400.66\(A\)\(1\)](#), [45 CFR § 400.76](#), [ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 2300](#), [WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE \(WIC\) SECTION 11320.31](#), [MANUAL OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES § 69-201.4](#), [MPP § 69-206.1](#), [MPP § 69-207.3\(C\)](#), [MPP § 69-208.4](#), AND [ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 23-30](#).

The purpose of this All County Letter (ACL) is to inform County Welfare Departments (CWDs) regarding [Assembly Bill \(AB\) 2300](#) and its impact on Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA), Entrant Cash Assistance (ECA), and Trafficking and Crime Victims Assistance Program (TCVAP).

Background

On March 22, 2023, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) released [All County Letter No. 23-30](#) to inform and provide guidance to CWDs regarding policy changes to the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) Welfare to Work (WTW) program as a result of AB 2300 and its inclusion of Paid Family Leave (PFL) in the definition of “disability-based unearned income” disregard, exemptions, and good cause.

As stated in ACL No. 23-30, three major changes from AB 2300 impacted the CalWORKs program, which in turn apply to RCA, ECA, and TCVAP. These changes include exemptions for PFL, teenagers registering to work, and good cause.

Paid Family Leave (PFL) Exemptions

The definition of disability-based unearned income expanded by AB 2300 includes PFL benefits. Accordingly, PFL benefits fall under disability-based unearned income disregards rules in the RCA eligibility determination, same as CalWORKs. CalWORKs is a combination of federal (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families or TANF) and state funded programs. [Title 45 Code of Federal Regulations \(CFR\) § 400.65\(a\)](#) states that "...[a] state may operate its refugee cash assistance program consistent with its TANF program." Specifically, in the [45 CFR § 400.66\(a\)\(1\)](#), the CFR states that the treatment of RCA applicant income and resources must be consistent to the TANF provisions in determining the initial and on-going eligibility.

Additionally, pursuant to the [Manual of Policies and Procedures \(MPP\) § 69-201.4](#), CalWORKs program regulations relating to financial eligibility and payments, unless specifically superseded by RCA, ECA, or TCVAP regulations, apply to RCA, ECA, and TCVAP, and shall be considered on the same basis as in the CalWORKs program (see also [MPP § 69-206.1](#)).

Therefore, the PFL income disregards also apply to RCA, ECA, and TCVAP eligibility determination. However, the CWDs should **NOT** apply the PFL time exemption to the RCA/ECA or TCVAP time clock. The RCA, ECA, and TCVAP twelve-month time clock does not have any time-stoppers. Any month of RCA, ECA or TCVAP benefits received are deducted from the twelve-month time limit period.

Exemption for Teenagers from Registration to Work

Pursuant to [45 CFR § 400.76](#), "States and local resettlement agencies operating a public/private RCA program, as well as States operating a publicly administered RCA program, may determine what specific exemptions, if any, are appropriate for recipients of a time-limited RCA program in their State." Therefore, per [MPP § 69-207.3\(c\)](#), RCA, ECA, and TCVAP applicants, who are 16 or 17 years old, are full-time students, and resumes full-time school attendance, as well as parents under 20 years old, may be exempt from employment registration. They do not re-qualify for the exemption.

However, AB 2300 expanded the once-in-a-lifetime exemption from WTW (or in the case of RCA/ECA if it is employment services) for individuals who are 16 or 17 years old and for parents under 20 years old. Under AB 2300, an individual who loses this exemption and is required to participate in employment services may again receive this exemption by resuming full-time school attendance, provided the individual otherwise qualifies.

Good Cause Exemptions from RCA Employment Service Registration

Per [MPP § 69-208.4](#), CWDs may exempt RCA, ECA, and TCVAP recipients from registering to employment services if a good cause exists. The additional circumstances granted as good cause pursuant to AB 2300 (*WTW Good Cause* section) and [WIC Section 11320.31](#) also apply to RCA, ECA, and TCVAP recipients. These are outlined in [ACL No. 23-30](#).

If you have questions or need additional guidance regarding the information in this letter, please contact the Refugee Programs Bureau at (916) 654-4356 or at Refugee.Policy@dss.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By

Kathy Yang
Deputy Director
Office of Equity